**Withdrawal of user charges**

*335. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI:
KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Members of Parliament have requested Government to withdraw the *'anti-people'* order on user charges levied by AIIMS;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering to withdraw the order as this would be a big relief to the poor patients; and

(c) by when the order is expected to be finally withdrawn?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (c) The All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, rationalized the charges for diagnostic and other procedures in November, 2005, after over 10 years of its introduction. Despite the rationalization, the poor and needy patients continue to be provided free treatment. The patients admitted in emergency have always been given free treatment irrespective of economic status. However, some Members of Parliament have requested the Government to withdraw the user charges levied by AIIMS.

The Institute Body of the AIIMS, at its meeting held on 5th July, 2006, considered the issue and decided to restore the user charges to *status quo* as prevalent prior to November, 2005. The Institute has restored the user charges as was prevalent prior to November, 2005, on 10.8.2006.

**Security arrangements in long distance trains**

†*336. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are many loopholes in the security arrangements for the passengers in the trains particularly in the long distance trains;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have not taken any concrete measures for the security of passengers inspite of innumerable incidents of robberies, lootings and thefts;

(c) if not, the details of the measures taken particularly with regard to the reserved bogies of long distance trains specially at night;

(d) whether Government are considering to constitute a special committee to provide better services and security to passengers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Inspite of the fact that according to Entry No. 2 of the State List of the Constitution of India, 'Police' (including Railways and village Police), is a State subject and further prevention of crime, registration of cases, their investigation and maintenance of law and order in railway premises as well as on running trains are, therefore, the statutory responsibility of the State Police, the railways have taken the following steps to provide security to the passengers in the railway bogies of the long distance trains specially at night:

(i) While Government Railway Police staff are being deployed to escort around 2200 long distance trains, Railway Protection Force has been effectively supplementing the efforts of the State Governments in this direction by providing escort parties on around 1390 long distance trains. During the period from July, 2004 to June, 2006, after amendment of the Railways Act 1989, the Railway Protection Force has prosecuted 19,15,755 persons for various offences under the provisions of the Railways Act, including 76,002 male persons travelling in women's compartments. In the same period 30 cases of offences against women were detected by the RPF with arrest of 30 offenders who were handed over to the Government Railway Police concerned for further legal action.

Moreover, Railway Protection Force over Indian Railways have detected 174 cases of drugging, 343 cases of luggage lifting, 101 cases of carrying illegal arms, 111 cases of gold chain/mangal sutra snatching, 96 cases of pick-pocketing, 683 cases of trafficking of Contraband Goods and 473 cases of other IPC offences from July, 2004 to June, 2006 over

the Indian Railways and handed over to the Government Railway Police. Further, escort parties of Railway Protection Force have accepted 2,094 FIRs from victim passengers and forwarded to Government Railway Police for expeditious registration of offences and enquiry.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

**Work plan agreement with Israel**

*337. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Israel have signed a three-year work plan for cooperation in the field of agriculture;

(b) if so, the details of the agreement;

(c) whether the work plan focuses on development of agri-business projects, colaborative research and development, academic and farmer-level exchanges and cooperation in gene bank resources;

(d) whether under the agreement, Israel shall transfer technologies and techniques relating to post-harvest management and value addition for fruits, vegetables and dairy products; and

(e) if so, to what extent it would be helpful to India?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. A Work Plan was signed on 10th May, 2006 between Government of India and the Government of Israel for cooperation in the field of agriculture for the year's, 2006-08. The Work Plan, *inter alia,* provides for collaboration in research in fertigation and soil-less culture for growing high value horticulture crops, development of techniques and facilities in energy efficient green house structures for semi-arid tropical climates, studies in recycling of waste water for irrigation, input delivery and extension service system, post harvest management and value addition for fruits, vegetables and dairy products, development of standards and processes for good agricultural practices and dairy development through genetic improvement.